

How to review, approve or deny the Free and Reduced Application

It is the responsibility of each institution to assign one or more staff members the responsibility of reviewing, approving, or denying the Free and Reduced applications that are submitted by households. This person or persons is referred to as the determining official.

1. The Free and Reduced application should be included in the institution's enrollment packet so that every household enrolling children has the right to complete an application.
2. Free and Reduced applications should be distributed to all households at least once per program year.
3. Once approved the Free and Reduced application is good for one year from the date of the signature of the household member signing the application.
4. As Free and reduced applications are submitted the determining official should review and approve or deny the application as soon as possible.

Reviewing Part 1 of the Free and Reduced Application:

Any household who reports a Food Stamp, TAFI, FDPIR or ICCP number should complete this part:

- All children listed as being enrolled applicants should have a current enrollment form on file with the institution.
- Each child's age should be included.
- If a child or household has a number in any of the four listed categories the household is automatically qualified as eligible for free meals.

The determining official can approve the application in the free category if the application is fully completed in Part I, signed and dated by the head of household or another member of the household.

The determining official should mark the free category and fill in all appropriate boxes in the box marked "For Official Use Only," sign and date the application. The application is then approved.

If the determining official finds a discrepancy with the case number recorded by the household member then the household should be contacted to clarify the discrepancy or the application should be denied until the household can verify that the number is an actual number for that particular category.

Part 4 must be signed and dated by the head of household or another member of the household.

Reviewing Part 2 of the Free and Reduced Application:

Foster children are considered a “household of one” and should not be included in the household information of the foster home. If siblings are foster children in the same home, all the siblings can be listed as a household. A foster child’s personal income should be reported by the household.

Part 4 must be signed and dated by the head of household or another member of the household.

Reviewing Part 3 of the Free and Reduced Application:

Any household who did not report a Food Stamp, TAFI, FDPIR or ICCP number should complete this part.

- Here the household lists those persons living in the household that are not children as enrolled applicants listed in Part I.
- The household reports all gross income received into the household by its members. Gross income means cash income before deductions for income taxes, employees’ social security taxes, insurance premiums, bonds, etc.
- Review the total number of household members listed in Parts 1, 2 and 3 making sure that the total reported is correct.
- The determining official must enter a Total Monthly Income in the small box marked “For Official Use Only.”
- The name and social security number of the head of household or other adult household member should be reported in this part. A social security number must be listed or the box checked “I do not have a Social Security Number.”

Reviewing Part 4 of the Free and Reduced Application:

The head of household or other adult household must sign and date the application. If not signed and dated the application must be returned to the household or denied.

Reviewing Part 5 of the Free and Reduced Application:

This part does not have to be completed by the adult household member.

Box marked “FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.”

After reviewing all the information reported on the Free and Reduced Application the determining official must approve the application and determine which category the household falls within: free, reduced or paid. The determining official must complete the box marked “FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY,” sign and date the application.